



The Case for Joint Professional Security Education for the Afghan National Security Forces

by Warren K. Vaneman

U.S. military history, during the 50 years prior to the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, is filled with examples of operational problems, often caused by different doctrine of the services, lack of compatibility of communications and weapons systems, and in some cases inter-service rivalries. To address these deficiencies, Senator Barry Goldwater (D-AZ) and Rep. William Flynt Nichols (D-AL) proposed wide sweeping reforms to the Department of Defense (DoD). These changes were designed to: centralize the military advice to the President of the United State through the Chairman of the Joints Chiefs; defined new roles of the services, and enhanced the roles of the combatant commanders; specified the sharing of new technologies among the services to gain efficiencies through shared procurements; and changed the personnel management of military officers.

During the 25 years since the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, the U.S. Military has embraced the reforms that paved the way to develop joint warfare capabilities. One of the main tenets credited with the advancement of joint collaboration was the development of service specific officers into joint officers through Joint Professional Military Education (JPME). Today, the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A)/Combined Security Transition Command- Afghanistan (CSTC-A) is working to convey the lessons learned by the U.S. Military, during the last quarter of a century, to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) be establishing Joint Professional Security Education (JPSE). However, will JPSE work in Afghanistan?

The JPME curricula was developed through existing Service War Colleges, the National War College, the Joint Forces Staff College, and the Joint Forces Staff College of the Armed Forces. Each institution has multi-service faculty and students, and maintains a joint perspective. The benefits realized from JPME include: collaboration among officers in joint matters; the ability of officers to plan large scale military operations from a joint perspective; and developing and enacting joint plans.

Joint Professional Military Education was discussed several decades prior to the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. As with most change, the implementation of these changes was difficult. The casual observer may note that “military jointness” would have been easier if the military was starting from a “blank slate”, than fitting existing organizations into a joint environment.

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Joint Professional Security Education

While the ANSF has made monumental progress since establishment of NTM-A in November 2009, the security force is still very much in its infancy. Current doctrine is limited to the specific services within the ANSF, and is narrow in scope. As such, the ANSF has what is tantamount to a “blank slate” for the development of the joint doctrine. The key to developing joint doctrine for the ANSF is by developing joint officers. Joint Professional Security Education (JPSE) is critical to for this human capital development.

Joint Professional Security Education is defined as the systematic instruction of professionals in subjects enhancing their knowledge of the science and art of war, national security, and intelligence. JPSE will produce: ANSF professionals educated in the profession of arms, national security, and policing; critical thinkers who view security affairs in the broadest context and are capable of identifying and evaluating likely changes and associated responses affecting the employment of the ANSF; develop senior officers who can develop and execute the Afghan National Security Strategy that effectively employs the ANSF to achieve Afghanistan’s National Security Goals; and, capture and analyze lessons learned on the unified employment of the ANSF to better develop Afghan Joint Doctrine.

Joint operations between the Afghan National Army (ANA), the Afghan Air Force¹ (AAF), and the Afghan National Police (ANP) will be critical as the *intequal* (transition) process progresses, and the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) thinning out. While the ANSF is designed to be an internal, defensive force, it will have to be prepared to execute several missions. Possible missions include: population protection and security; engaging in irregular warfare against insurgents; combating narco-terrorism; and responding to natural disasters such as earthquakes and flooding. No single entity within the ANSF will be able to deal with these issues alone, therefore GIRoA will have to apply economy of force as a operational concept on a regular basis.

Joint Professional Security Education is envisioned as a continuous spectrum, and will consist of four levels of security education for ANSF officers. Those educational levels are:

- Pre-commissioning - Military education leading to a commission in the ANA, AAF, and ANP. This includes the education provided at the National Military Academy of Afghanistan, and at Officer Candidate School (OCS).
- Primary - Military education taught at select branch, or specialty, schools;
- Intermediate - Military education focusing on thinking operationally and strategically to solve complex military problems in a difficult security environment, and across the ANSF. These curricula currently reside in the Junior Officer command and Staff Course at the Afghan National Security University (ANSU), the European Union Police (EUPOL) sponsored Command and Staff College for the ANP, and the Counter Insurgency (COIN) Training Center.
- Senior - Military education focusing on the strategic and operational realms of war. These curricula currently reside with the Operational Command and Staff Course and the Strategic Command and Staff Course within the ANSU.

¹The Afghan Air Force is part of the Afghan National Army, but operates autonomously. However, when considering Afghan Joint Doctrine, the AAF should be treated separately due to the different mission and capabilities. The AAF should also be treated separate from the ANA when determining course quotas.

The Afghan JPSE will also include selected joint education for non-commissioned officers (NCOs). For example, the Bridmal Academy, for sergeant majors, is a candidate institution that could be used to train senior NCOs from the ANA, AAF, and ANP.

To gain efficiencies within the training base, select branch schools will also be part of the JPSE curricula. Candidate branch schools were selected based on tasks and functions that are common across the ANSF. These branch schools include the Signals, Logistics/Human Resources/Finance, Legal, and Religious and Cultural Affairs Schools. Using the same training base will ensure that the ANA, AAF, and ANP use the same systems and processes, an achievement not realized by many western nations.

The JPSE will be overseen by the Center for Joint Training. This Center will be responsible for both internal oversight and external coordination. Internally the Center's responsibilities include: formulating policies for coordinating the national security training and education for the ANSF through JPSE system of institutions; periodically reviewing and revising the curriculum of each institution within the JPSE to best meet the needs of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA); establishing GIROA training and education requirements, and developing a *tashkil* (manning table and equipment list) identifying the capacity for the schools to support those requirement; ensuring that there is a "proper balance" of students from the ANA, AAF, and ANP within each education level.

Externally, the Center is responsible for: identifying, and managing, training and education requirements needed to satisfy the objectives of JPSE; interfacing with the International Community to obtain training and education sponsorship; and managing the training and education donations, ensuring that they are applied to the proper courses across the JPSE continuum.

The JPSE continuum should begin for the ANSF Officer at the entry level, and continue throughout their career, with each educational milestone building upon, and complementing, the earlier joint education received. The institutions that will make up a JPSE Consortium are currently disconnected by ministry and donor. The Ministry of Defense (MoD) educational institutions and courses are currently sponsored by Coalition partners within NTM-A/CSTC-A. The Ministry of Interior (MoI) ANP Command and Staff College is sponsored by EUPOL.

The Center for Joint Training will consist of a more diverse set of stakeholders than is represented by the JPSE student population. Led by the Ministry of Defense (MoD), the Center for Joint Training will include equal representation from the Ministry of the Interior (MoI), and representatives from other ministries including the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Higher Education, Office of National Security Council (ONSC), the Ministry of the Hajj and Islamic Affairs, the Afghanistan Council of Ulema, and the NDS.

Challenges to Implementation

The success of JPSE is far from guaranteed as the challenges are many. The challenges include: (i) achieving recognition of the importance of JPSE within GIROA; (ii) the stark differences in the ANA, AAP, and ANP purpose, mission, and cultures; (iii) identifying a governmental hierarchy so that JPSE will have the authority, and clear path to GIROA decision-makers and influence; and, (iv) managing the education donor nations, and determine how those donations contribute to the JPSE education.

Implementation of JPME in the United States was initially difficult because of the role of the Joint Officer. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Study Group² wrote:

Joint assignments are seldom sought by officers. A joint position removes them from the environment for which they have been trained, in which they have established relationships and reputations, and which they seek advancement. It places them instead in a wholly new environment involving unfamiliar procedures and issues for which most of them have little or no formal training. Their fitness reports (which affect their careers and prospects for advancement) are often entrusted to officers of other services with little in common by way of professional background.

Since the ANSF is in its infancy, the concept of the joint officer has not yet been realized institutionally. However, the concept is practiced as the most senior levels. As evidence of this, there are several general officers serving within the MoI that were formally general officers within the MoD. This includes the Minister of the Interior, General Bismillah Kahn Mohammadi.

The presence of ISAF in Afghanistan also contributes to GIRoA not realizing the need for joint officers. With more than 140,000 ISAF troops in Afghanistan, there is little need for either the ANA or ANP to work jointly, as there are significant Coalition forces to support unilateral operations. However, given the range of options for the steady-state ANSF force structure, it is clear that the ANA, ANP, and AAF will have to collaborate in addressing the many security challenges Afghanistan will face as a sovereign nation once the Coalition Forces have departed. Understanding of joint vocabulary and doctrine is essential for success.

When considering JPSE, a comparison between the ANSF and the U.S. Military is often highlighted. Unlike the ANSF, when Goldwater-Nichols mandated Joint Professional Military Education for the U.S. Military, the services resided within DoD, and had similar missions– the defense of the United States of America. The military services were not directed to integrate with federal law enforcement agencies, like the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) or Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), but internally within DoD. While this is a popular argument, perhaps the model of integration among the U.S. military services is an inappropriate model for the Afghan JPSE. I submit that a more appropriate model is that of the U.S. National Intelligence Community. The Intelligence Community is a compilation of 18 intelligence agencies with disparate missions, cultures, which came together as a result of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004.

The 18 Intelligence Community organization's missions varied from the federal law enforcement missions of the FBI, to the geospatial-intelligence (GEOINT) mission of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), to the clandestine Human Intelligence (HUMINT) mission of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), to the military intelligence missions of the military services, and the hybrid military-law enforcement mission of the U.S. Coast Guard. While the Intelligence Community's existence has been tenuous, gains are continuing to be made with respect to coordination and cooperation, due to the oversight from Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI).

² Howard D. Graves and Don. M. Snider, „Emergence of the Joint Officer“, *Joint Forces Quarterly* (Autumn 1986), 53-57.

The common denominator between DoD's successful implementation of JPME, and the Intelligence Community coming together as a community and not a collection of individual agencies, is the authority granted to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and ODNI. For the Afghan JPSE to be successful, GIRoA will need an oversight body that has the authority to bring the various factions together. That body may be either the Office of the National Security Council (ONSC), or the Council of Ministers.

An initial GIRoA Working Group focusing on the Center for Joint Training has suggested that the committee report to the ONSC. However, as of this writing, it is unclear if the ONSC has such authority and influence, to oversee the Center for Joint Training, or an initiative such as JPSE. The ONSC is considered extra-constitutional (i.e. a parallel structure to the Council of Ministers that was based on a U.S. model while developing the current GIRoA Constitution) to Afghanistan's Security Architecture. To provide effective governance, the ONSC must be bestowed sufficient authority to influence the MoD and MoI to work together, and the authority to work with donor nations and organizations with the International Community. If GIRoA is not going to embrace an ONSC that will have sufficient authority to govern the Center for Joint Training, perhaps this body should report to the Council of Ministers. The 1923 Afghanistan Constitution gives the Council of Ministers the responsibility for the administration of the government³, and the authority to formulate foreign and domestic policies of the government⁴. Regardless if the Center for Joint Training is placed under the ONSC or the Council of Ministers, the Center must be assigned a place of prominence within the GIRoA Security Architecture so that it can influence joint training across the MoD and MoI.

Current International Community donations to professional security education are either managed via NTM-A/CSTC-A, or are bi-lateral agreements with GIRoA. As such, the current process may contain gaps in the education topics, or duplicative topics at different education levels. Furthermore, the international donors often dictate what they will provide with respect to education curriculum and facilities.

For JPSE to be successful, the Center for Joint Training will have to develop curriculum requirements to determine the needs, and then negotiate with the potential international donors to determine who will best support the needs. This is a major departure from allowing education donors to stipulate their own educational requirements. To date, many of the donations are provided through NTM-A/CSTC-A. The Center for Joint Training will have to establish their own relationships with the International Community.

Conclusion

Successful implementation of JPSE promises to bring the ANA, AAF, and ANP closer together doctrinally and operationally through a common academic background. Future expansion of JPSE could include the National Directorate of Security (NDS), and the civilian workforce from MoD, MoI, and other select ministries.

Critics of the Afghan JPSE argue that it took over 200 years for the U.S. Military to create joint education, joint officers, and joint doctrine, and that the ANSF should concentrate on the basics of their particular service. It is true that there is still a long way to go to achieve ANSF professionalization. NTM-A/CSTC-A has a comprehensive plan for continuing to grow,

³ Article 25, 1923 Constitution of Afghanistan.

⁴ Article 29, 1923 Constitution of Afghanistan.

develop, and professionalize the ANSF. However, I argue that developing a joint culture would have been easier for the U.S. Military if “jointness” was mandated from the beginning. Because it wasn’t, the U.S. Military Services went through significant “growing pains” during the implementation of Goldwater-Nichols. Implementing JPSE now, and creating a joint culture for the ANSF, they may be spared the many challenges that surely lie ahead.

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